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ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 280745Z MAY 09  
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5187  
INFO RUEHKK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 0293

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 001219

NOFORN  
SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ELA, NEA/RA, AND OES  
STATE PASS TO USAID

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/28/2019  
TAGS: [SENV](#) [EAGR](#) [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [JO](#) [IS](#)  
SUBJECT: ISRAELI EMBASSY IN JORDAN QUESTIONS JORDAN,S WATER  
STRATEGY

REF: A. A. AMMAN 1116  
[B](#). B. AMMAN 1027  
[C](#). C. AMMAN 906  
[D](#). D. AMMAN 860  
[E](#). E. AMMAN 508  
[F](#). F. 08 AMMAN 1639

Classified By: DCM Lawrence Mandel for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C/NF) Jordan and Israel, which both suffer from water shortages, have enjoyed a healthy collaboration on this critical issue. The 1994 peace treaty stipulated water exchange provisions between the two countries and as recently as the summer 2008 drought, Israel loaned Jordan extra water (ref F). In a May 13 meeting with Emboffs (DCM, USAID, ESTH), Israeli DCM Alon Roth-Snir highlighted Israel's desire to continue supporting Jordan in the water sector. According to Roth-Snir, during a recent water pollution accident affecting Jordan's water supply from Israel, Israel provided ten times the amount of affected water, before Jordan even sought corrective action (ref C).

[1](#)2. (C/NF) According to Roth-Snir, Israel has offered to provide Jordan with desalinated water at \$0.72/cubic meter (the projected price of the water to be pumped from the Disi aquifer is \$1.0-\$1.2/cubic meter (ref B)), and has proposed the option of a desalination plant on Israel's Mediterranean coast, to be operated by the GOJ. Jordan, however, has not been responsive to Israeli overtures. (Note: Israel has made a significant commitment to enhance its desalination efforts to combat its own water woes. End Note).

[1](#)3. (C/NF) Israel, according to Roth-Snir, believes Jordan's two proposed mega-water projects, the planned Disi and the proposed Red Sea-Dead Sea conveyance project are likely to face significant difficulties. As a result, Jordan will have little recourse in the medium term but to purchase water from Israel. He further noted that the annual "pilgrimage" to Israel by Jordan's Minister of Water and Irrigation is likely to happen soon with the accompanying request for more water for the difficult summer months.

[1](#)4. (C/NF) Israel is aware of Jordan's energy woes as well as its potential for solar and wind energy generation. According to Roth-Snir, Israel has offered to purchase solar or wind generated power from southern Jordan to strengthen Jordan's nascent energy sector.

[1](#)5. (C/NF) Comment: The GOJ has not proved to be particularly successful at projecting water related operational and maintenance costs and developing sound financial models. Post concurs with the Israeli view that the GOJ has laid its bets on the two mega-water projects without having adequate contingency plans. It is likely that Jordan will need Israeli water assistance for the foreseeable

future. End Comment.

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